

# MIROKU

Taruho Inagaki

5,676,480,000



1min = 36

1b. = 2,160

56,764,800,000 breaths

Miroku

Taruho Inagaki

Translated from the Japanesse by

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*For Bill Fackler, with love and hope for his well-being.  
Enjoy this — one of the best space-ship rides in the twentieth century.*

1 min

1b.

56,764,80



## Miroku

*There is no room for doubt in philosophical thinking as well as in the field of natural science that these cosmic events happen without fail. The reason being that any evolutionary process, from the nature of the concept of evolving, has to have a terminus. That is to say, it has to reach its purpose, a destination.*

Dr. Koeber  
— from one man's scrapbook

1min =

1h. =

56,764,80



Part I  
A Brass Bullet

The title credit at the beginning of a serial movie wouldn't leave Emile's mind. When he saw a crowd whose Dadaesque silhouettes were intersecting in front of bright storefront windows, or that a night summer breeze was making his necktie on his chest flap against his face under a strap in the last train, the art title was — together with the faint violet scent on his collar — quite difficult to forget.

The night scape of the city looked like paper cut-outs. Beyond tower-shaped buildings with their lights on there was a mist, with 5 or 6 asteroids shining above it. Then a bullet which gave an impression of a cannon ball appeared, and after swimming in circles like a fish, it touched the tip on one point of the sky, then it spelled out in big lettering against the sky on the right hand side — The Brass Bullet (the bullet served as a period and it stayed as it was.)

Aeroplanes, motor boats, masked bandits, and explosion scenes appeared one after another in a sensational Yankee drama, owing something to the absurdity and frailty of celluloid art, but if you took up the title itself, it contained some indescribable sorrows. — Might it have been because of the effect of the moving bullet as if by clockwork? There was a so-called 'Fin de siècle feel,' but it was different from the nineteenth century or the twentieth century. For example, there is a bundle of Japanese rice paper which absorbs the ink really well, Emile thought.

On both edges of the bundle, if you put red and blue liquid at each end, the red and blue would be transferred to the paper underneath just like gradations of Japanese fireworks sold at concession stands during summer time. And theoretically these red and blue colors must be connected,



therefore you can assume the red is all there is. Then how about considering each leaf with both its edges in red like each century as it's folded one over another? Is this how, in the beginning and the end of all things — as if there is sunrise and sunset, red gradations, at the top and the bottom of a blank paper called "One day" — each in its similarity, a feeling of eternity, is transferred . . . . . ?

He thought up to this point and applied this metaphor to the art title in question. Then like a double exposure in cinema, it overlapped with a San Francisco-like night scape, and an "Ultimate City" which this civilization would reach after dozens of centuries later, could be felt. And its strange future buildings emerged, in the twilight indistinguishable from dawn to evening, translucent, lit-up without a sound. — But this might have come from the pessimistic quick march which begins as soon as subtitles begin to appear. He thought, and many times tried to whistle, tracing the half-step descending passage of the quick dance tune, Two-step Zaragoza, — the movement where Nirvāṇa glimmers.

The future city as a title background brought an opera bill drawn by Lautrec — it consisted of a group of men and women in masks — to his mind. Beyond the street in the dusk, a pomegranate red, and an incomparably transparent blue green signal could be seen. Emile would always associate them with one visual image. It was a peacock-like woman with two red round-shapes on both sides of her face, about to receive a champagne glass between poised lips, and a black shadow at her back hanging down over her as if to hold her in its embrace; this suggested the content of the glass. There was a long novel in translation that he'd recently finished reading with patience, called *Jean Christophe*. This voluminous work advocated a heroism for the new century, was murky throughout just like the key note which was music, and was quite difficult to recount the plot after the reading, especially how near the end of the chapter where the young Jaqueline and M. and Mme Olivier are described . . . . . the scenery described there also had a common atmosphere, like an artificial mock-up city . . . . . Parisiennes nowadays, except for listening to the occasional lectures at Sorbonne by professor Bergson, became distant from cocks or newspapers, they uniformly absorbed themselves in automobile races, getting their faces toasty brown. — It might have been the part like that, or the chapter titled 'The Market Place' had a similar air to it. It was a scene with a young boy who works in a factory, listens to the musician Christophe talk each evening, and imagines a revolution with a

throbbing heart on the stone pavement in a small court surrounded by tall buildings. According to Emile, this boy's imagination should be transmitted like electric waves, and extended to issues of sex, aviation techniques, astronautics, psychoanalysis, so-called general pathological phenomena, especially SPR, that is, occultism as established by Sir Kirkus, Doctor Wallace, Professor Aksakov and Oliver Lodge, and so forth, to all the vast and boundless spheres of human activities which could not be imagined at the present time. These must be the objects of contemplation as in Maeterlinck rather than in the world of H. G. Wells.

AS SUN FELL OVER the roofs to dark, Emile himself was also in the habit of spending a little bit of time indulging in a desultory thought, closed up in the room upstairs facing west. The rosy western sky was darkly lighting up, in the dim room before the light was flicked on, the linoleum floor or the furniture on it, with a completely different meaning from the day time. Around the time when two or three silver stars over the window-panes started to twinkle, the table and the chairs in the room, a full-length mirror installed on the wall, a picture frame, a wardrobe, all of these uniformly lost their boundaries, and became shattering fragments, reciprocally saturating each other, as if weaving the 'Materialistic Foresight Theory' by a futurist painter; they seemed to him as if they were radiating lines of force touching the nebula over a boundless distance. On a night like this, among the crowds walking in front of display windows in mid-town — in the bogie electric car making a turn, glimmering like a flame at the intersection right in front of them, and in the watery red tail lights of the limousine shrinking away — there was a thing that I used to know really well, and I would feel like the manner in which I am walking tonight is truly happening in a far distant future night, and in a city in the world of stars. — But, most of the time, while he would be looking at stars outside the window as their numbers increased, Emile would imagine a certain unfamiliar blonde girl sitting next to him. This must have been because he remembered passages from a biography of an American aviator which he liked to read at that time. At the same time, he must have chosen one of the students from the Canadian school right behind his school. The "Art Smith Story" had appeared in *Bremen* in San Francisco,



and it was starting to be published in specialized magazines bit by bit. This is from the part he had read recently —

*It was a long quiet summer evening in the East. Together with his beloved wife, the aviator stepped out onto the porch. After they had argued about the future possibilities of aviation, they were tired and silent. She would read more poems and romances than he. With a painting of a night sky filled with beautiful illuminated aeroplanes in her mind, she mentioned this to her husband. This idea moved him on, now to showering white rains of lights under a starry sky over the World Fair, giving 'those who thought like him or those who were doing similar things' a frenzied joy.*

While Emile was tracing the dialogue between the aviator and his wife as he was remembering, his own fantasy took it over without him being aware of it. And perhaps, after he had argued over the possibilities of aviation, while they both were silent, he noticed the white face next to him was talking to him, bewildered,

"Pardon me?" he retorted.

"Do you pay only that much attention to what I say?" She leaned her head slightly as if a little discontented, and turned around.

"No, I ..." with a slight stutter, "I was thinking about the world up above the air"

Her eyes opened wide as she heard this.

"The world up above the air, how meaningful the words are! If you imagine the future century where it will have been realized, how beautiful can it be?"

Suddenly, all existence around the two disappeared. It had seemed like a roof top of a tall building, now the bright city below enclosed with patios, the distant scape like an illuminated mock-up city, both were fading like a dissolving cinema; there was an expansion of dark violet space filled with night dew instead. Rhythmic noises became a big symphony, making the quiet night atmosphere shiver. The origins of the sounds were huge, a shining aeroplane and airship. / Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails / Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew / it was the scenery Tennyson sang. Interweaving this, the bench on which the two were sitting was gliding like a water skipper. The mist, like perfume coming out of an atomizer, made them

soaking wet. "There, an arrow of rainbow-colored searchlight, look at its reflections on gas-bags of all sorts of shapes or on top of a wing!"

Illusions were about to go away, he leaned on her lap, was listening to the calm sound of her heart. He felt as if it were connected to the great aspirations of the New World.

"Oh!" he shouted. "A propeller is humming in your chest"

She started laughing loudly when she heard this.

"You always don't take me seriously"

"That's because you think about things out of this world all the time" — Then she added, looking concernedly, "But do you think the world up above the air could become a reality?"

"Of course" he replied. "In a Russian novel, there are descriptions of the hearts of peasants who kiss the earth. A protagonist in an Italian story heard the sound of the sea in his lover's heart. For me, it is the sound of the propeller. I am strongly aware that the progress of society always comes from human dreams"

— What in the world was this all about? Was this a deviant tendency or a sign of decadence, or was it something completely different from those? He was asking and answering himself this the next day at school. He often suffered from this kind of criticism from his senior students or his peers, concerning his unrealistic opinions or the like which occasionally slipped out of his mouth. — But it can't simply be called decadence. In that place, a something different, far beyond the measure of those people, truth in future must be contained, he thought. It was in the same vein as the end of the century that was indicated by the brass bullet; it was not 'an ordinary fin de siècle feel.' It was hard to express it verbally, but only a student named 'I' would understand *this*.

'I' was his senior, but after a whole year's leave of absence because of pleuræ problems, he occupied a seat right behind Emile in his class. And before long they had both started to exchange poems or bits of comments scribbled on torn out scraps of paper. 'I' had a shrill voice like a woman, but he had his chest sticking out like Bonaparte at Brienne Military Academy, and walked putting on airs. Emile had to acknowledge 'I's' superiority to the sensitivity he showed in free verse form. There was oftentimes vocabulary Emile didn't like such as embryo, or sweaty workers, or the smell of carbolic acid; on the other hand, 'I' was good at writing things like: 'red stockings at a rendez-vous' or 'sun shone like a pearl' or 'a monoplane, blue on top, red on the bottom, soaring over the French plain in



spring' or 'the time when a mackerel half-moon hangs high' or 'the Pullman car rushing into a tunnel at the Austro-German border' or 'masquerades in a basement in a big city', and so forth. One lunch break, on the black board in the class room, 'I' scribbled the nine words, 'The Sky of a City on a June night' and erased it right away. "It's nothing" he told Emile in a shrill voice. "— But, it sounds rather good, doesn't it?"

I see! *The Sky of a City on a June night*.

I had also had this same feeling before. When you visualize the world up above the air gazing up the evening sky, these evenings must eventually be, 'The Sky of a City on a June night.' On the dark jasper sky which was hanging heavy as if embracing the round earth which was sweating and passing a wakeful night, stars sparkled in maddening placements as if they disturbed constellations, and together with the sound of a clock measuring the seconds, the leaning of the ground surface, around the time when the moon reddened like a Ground-Cherry, was pushed onto the one end of the horizon at last, the high-rise buildings which couldn't tolerate any more suffering suspended from the day time, not being able to hold them together any more, must be swaying and leaning into each other like clusters of quartz, and surging electricity between each other. If I quote the 'I,' around that hour, in a basement somewhere, a set of white masks like race horses' head gears would be making their oaths in front of a pail of nitroglycerine, and a gentleman with a striped mask who kidnapped a beautiful boy from M. Calai's costume party would be driving his automobile at full speed, to the park in front of Théâtre de l'Opéra.

According to Emile himself, there would be a faint sound of an electric current under the dome at an astronomical observatory in the outskirts; facing his son who had been away for a long time, an old astronomer would be saying things like, "Numbers of worlds are going out of existence and are being born right at this moment. I can't only worry about a human being on earth like you" Or rather under a more modernized big dome, encircling a big telescope suspended like a monster, the 'Futures' must be flying around like elves. — Immediately after the afternoon class began, a crumpled paper scrap flew in from the back. Opened, a poem entitled 'The Sky of a City on a June night' was written on it. *He did it!* Emile thought. 'Ether drew fantasy on a void of three dimensional existence in seven colors, a gentleman consisting of spheres and hexahedrons, performed a perpendicular dance on the Litter Theater stage, dumbfounding the chequered audience' phrases like this were written on it:

salamander dancing in exult

The moon smiles . . . . .

Scoping a distant future betwixt life and death you aviators

These last three lines toward the end were left in the back of his mind, starting to form his own style.

It was that: he did not have a problem with an ordinary aeroplane with a gas engine, but better to make it a more strange futuristic machine. And above the sky of the city on a June night appearing in the title background, performances far exceeding Smith's or Bouquel's must take place. — But, according to Emile's logic, these aeroplanes were to fall like meteor flowers as everyone clenching their fists in suspense, on a lawn at a marina where salty wind blows, and there was to be a white smoke rising among the racks and ruins of wings or round tubes. But in a short while when people were gazing up breathless, sky dancers who were circling madly dragging the stripes of searchlights and the sparkling night city up and down and left and right, what did they glance at the moment of the crash? It felt like it was something like, 'Unfathomable' in the far distant west.

The next morning, Emile handed 'I' a small watercolor painted in the Futurist style. It consisted of a group of buildings piled up, transparent from penetration by lamp lights, and a row of automobiles like a thin tape streaming underneath. One rainy night, the scenery seen over the windshield of an omnibus had hinted at this design. At that time he was in one-sided love with a girl who looked like she was brought up in a gas light, but that operetta dancer died soon after. It happened during a tour, only two friends of hers, one late afternoon in the rain, saw her off holding umbrellas to the foot of a hill in the outskirts following the coffin on a cart . . . . . He heard it from somebody, the scenery of the city seen over the windshield of the bus with raindrops was connected to this, that was when an explanatory note for this small Futurist piece came by itself. It said: '— Not a crowd or automobiles or electric cars or buildings any more, the city in the night we saw was translucent, solely, seven-colored fantasy that ether has reflected on a void of three-dimensional existence'

Ever since, 'The Sky of the City on a June Night' of 'I' and his 'Night Street' became confused, and started attacking Emile during sleep. On these occasions, he would be waiting for something in a room high up in a stupendously high building. There was a woman, and he would have intermittent conversation with her, though there was no clue; she seemed like a character from *Jean Christophe*.



— One time 'N,' a scholastic classmate who had thin eyes like a cat in the sunshine and an almost white face, drew a gourd shape as a demonstration on the blackboard. Since there are gourd or loofah shapes, the universe is not necessarily spherical, he explained. — Or maybe it would be like this, added he, then he derived a nod from the edge of the gourd. Emile took it as make-believe, but after a while he started to think that what his friend said might be true. Ether used by 'I,' he had first learned from 'N.' There had already been experiments by Michelson and Morley that showed there was no evidence of the indomitable medium called ether which evenly filled up space. — 'N' also mentioned Einstein's 'warp of space' but Emile had already found the name 'Minkowski' in the corner of a science section in a newspaper. And the *world-point* and the *world-line* which this mathematician elucidated remained in his mind, for example: 'The movement of the *world-point* in three dimensional space is represented by the *world-line* in four dimensional time-space' something like this, was taken as something marvelous. This happened much later, when he found on a page from an astronomical academy newsletter a model of space by Dr. de Sitter. It was supposed to have combined time and space, the explanation on the morning glory-cup-shaped constriction in the center was incomprehensible, but he couldn't drive away the thought that even this was fascinating. 'When you reach the equator of this space the hands of the clock will stop' or 'On this surface the *mother-line* leans 45 degrees, and this is the channel of light. The *world-line* of each molecule draws hyperbola, and when its velocity is smaller than the speed of light it is on the approximity of the perpendicular surface. Therefore in that space the *world-line* of light and the molecule's *world-line* crosses only once' — he had memorized fragments like this. — Now in the room in the upper high rise in his dream, a theory like this was utilized at his disposal. Answering people's questions, just like Bergson when he had first met Einstein, (According to the Spanish minister who had said this), 'Using equation after equation, — So this is what you mean, — If so you say a conclusion like this would happen' he retorted by forestalling. Time passed like this, but there was no sign of anything happening that had been anticipated. Tonight it seemed as if he were seeing off the moon rocket departing from an outlying desert area, or watching 'Sky Dragon' perform. "I wonder what happened" his beautiful counterpart cast her eyes on the clock hands on a mantelpiece. It was so quiet around, he leaned his head out the window. The crowds that had been clamoring in

the street had disappeared, no one could be seen. Not even a single car was visible. He turned his head thinking what was this all about, one side of a building yonder shone. What! Midnight rainbow? A 'Red Chi' indicated in an old document, or an aurora? No, it was a giant serpent flickering incessantly. Incomprehensible, some unknown grotesque thing was writhing all over the northern sky of the city, and glimmering every time it rapidly expanded or contracted, dancing in a craze, drawing a spiral beyond imagination. An unusual smell, either chemical or organic, had filled the vicinity. He would contend that it was the smell of ions. The other part would insist it was a potassium bromide, if not a silver bromide, and neither would yield. . . . . It was a dream like this.

One day, he went to a corner of the playground. A classmate 'F' was leaning on a wooden horse, and seeing Emile approaching, he held up one hand, "There, look above that mountain. At the true blue sky. Isn't it going to burst out? If you poked lightly at the blue place with a finger, it would break like an eggshell, and we could peek through to the other side — At any moment"

Just as he said Ah hah! the purplish spring sky where there was not a single bit of cloud seemed like an unwrinkled, and very fragile film. But if one spot on the film broke, what were we going to see? It would probably be a vacant, whitish place, he thought. There was a similar incident like this. He was also gazing at the emerald green sky from here, what would the far away, the end of the extremities be like? Would it be one point, or would it be a wall, he pondered. Someone was next to him, "You know what, from this really big vacant place numerous stars are hanging — Isn't this funny? In the box where nothing was in in the first place there is something in it. What do you think about this?" the someone asked, so he contemplated on the limit of space, that person seemed like 'F' But now was the first time that he was talking with 'F' about such things. Then again it also might have been a dream, Emile thought.

"They say, you are doing philosophy" the person in question precociously asked him again.

"If you put yourself into it, do Indian philosophy. Stuff like Bergson is just running idle"

'F' was precocious in general, it seemed there was a three-year age difference between 'F' and himself. For some reason, it seemed like he had an air about him like he would gather small children near a mud wall in the sun, and sell something by giving a guessing contest; this was owed



probably much to 'F' being always away from everybody, and wandering alone as if there were some plans. Recently 'F' was avoided by everybody, and his solitude had escalated even more. Emile remembered well, there was a round-faced senior student with long eyelashes, who always walked with his hands in his pockets. The student was slightly mischievous, and would wedge himself into student haunts, or suddenly take his shirt off and grab a horizontal bar and whirl himself around. But this mischievous, small, always jolly junior high senior, one warm day around ten thirty, plunged himself into a dashing locomotive. A rumor circulated in his class that he didn't get along with his step-mother, but this unexpected incident couldn't pass without the young philosopher 'F' being mentioned. "Since there is a will to kill oneself, it is not necessary to venture to stop it" they said 'F' himself had told the assistant principal; it was causing a dispute. Emile couldn't resist a feeling of wanting to ask 'F' once, about what these two had usually talked about amongst themselves. But he didn't know how to broach the matter.

"Incidentally" after a while, 'F' started to talk again. "Is your autobiography progressing? From the fact that you have already found your life's work, I have a great regard for you"

He wondered where it had leaked out from. Might have been the influence from that American aviator's partial-biography; a longing to write similar things had welled up in Emile's mind. And this project, only 'N' was supposed to be aware of. Because he had asked him about the illustration as a frontispiece for this writing. The work had commenced, but it was not the beginning part, it was the part near the very end. The opening hadn't been finished. Just because, at the ending of this imaginary biography, Emile had to be an aviator. And, 'My undertakings in the world have at last reached the beginning. There are many pending problems of distance or velocity or altitude, as an individual I have to secure my parents' and wife's happiness. There is man's work to be done. Society's progress always comes from human dreams. About what the future of aviation can bring about, I can not imagine more than when Watt had looked at steam lifting up a lid on a pot, and dreamed of the first steam engine. Right, aviators are revolutionaries. Only those who affirm this can go higher beyond the flock of white seagulls, can comprehend the meaning of the exaltation I feel, while you take off seeing numerous white faces who are looking intently at you down your feet' — This was the ending, but it might have been that he wanted to use this part, he wanted to make up

the whole thing. Because he really liked 'The end of things' in everything. In this, like a night before leaving for a faraway place, or like being ready for something to happen after cleaning things up, he was longing for a *silent hour*.

Once it was a steam ship destined to *shipwreck*, and a steam locomotive fated to *collision*, but now it was replaced with the *æroplane* which was confirmed with *crash*. It was 'the spring crashing before noon trailing purple smoke' that he was thirsting for. The same meaning as the brass bullet was not an ordinary fin de siècle, about 'My Eschatology'; he would be able to explain it someday. At this point Emile thought, — Whatever the matter is, I am fascinated by the *feeling of ending*, now there was no other way to put it. Even the entire summer vacation when white clouds flock was far inferior to the wonderfulness of the last day of the spring semester when it was about to happen. When he was in elementary school, there was a classmate who managed the clearing of the classroom desk at the end of the semester, and at the same time the family moved to a different place, full of envy, he had said he wondered if the same thing would happen to himself, "Our house is not rented so we cannot move anywhere else" he was promptly scolded. — In this way, besides 'The Brass Bullet' some twilight feelings had been accumulated in the back of Emile's mind. "People destined to live survived. People destined to die died. We came to the end of this long story" these were words from the ending of a Russian novel. "Life is a dream, the art is a dream, Emma put her lips to the glass of poison" these were sentences from the last chapter of a French story. About his inclination toward ending, he had been telling 'F'. . . . . I could remember that. Back when I was about to become possessed of self-recognition, I was alone in the house one afternoon toying with wood blocks, something like black clouds rushed toward me. It was like my father, and my mother, and my sister who weren't home from school, and myself, all the people would not exist anywhere, it would not keep on like the way it was, and in the end nothing would be left . . . . . something like a loneliness beyond description, forlorn feeling, and I could very well throw away the toys I had been holding because of it. It went away immediately like a phantom robber, but might it have had its origins around this? He had asked his senior friends. And he added, — "A night in a small German city with a lot of trees . . . . . No, it is close to dawn. In the burning stove, you put all the old letters and photographs and documents. And you drink a glass of pomegranate-colored wine. There is a loaded pistol



on the table. It is quiet all round, a planter lit-up in the faint moonlight seems to be connected to eternity itself. Something like this. Isn't it wonderful?"

"Werther in a blue coat and a yellow vest?" 'F' put in a word. "Or, with a pistol in his pocket wandering among black alder trees, Moritz in the play *Spring's Awakening*. You have noticed a good point. — I also think the black clouds you mentioned were a really good experience. William and his brother James, who were the first to discover Bergson, the father of these brothers, Sir Henry once said. According to him, when there is no problem or anything, unrest would seize him like a flash of lightning and every bone in his body would start to shiver, he said. There is a feeling that nears him, something invisible, someone who emits weird air is crouching down, and his voice wouldn't come out no matter how he tried. After all isn't this the same as your black clouds?" And his counterpart in a leisurely way, turned over the page of a small cloth-bound book he had been carrying under his arm. Saying, how about this, in a precocious tone, he slowly started to recite.

"— Once we, — Are you following me?" 'F' continued. "Once we cut off our will, life is seen as merely a hazy and faint phenomeon, as a dream near dawn, and in the end even that, the same as a human dream, before we know it, without any marked transition, will die out. Therefore, Mme Guyon also stated in her autobiography: 'Now I don't have any discrimination, I never long for anything. I myself don't know if I am being here or not, etc.'"

"What is the book called?" he asked.

The letters on the spine of the book which was held out read, *Essays by Schopenhauer*. These words made him, for no reason, imagine a slope on his way to school, a corner along train tracks lined by white willows. And even on a summer afternoon when a sweaty horse pulling a load looked very miserable, or even on a winter morning when the breath turned white, and a sweet smell of a wool sweater was longed for, every time he walked down there, without exception, he imagined Mme Guyon, whom he didn't know where she was from. Mostly her image appeared at a pale blue window at dawn, as a portrait of a gray-haired white woman who was intently looking at God in her pressed palms, immobile, neither in passion nor longing anymore, indifferent to external things. These words by Mme Guyon sounded like they were made to fit the explanatory note for the picture of the night city, but in this world, among the things we do daily,

in such a way, each similar thing would overlap one another, I wonder why I feel this way?

TRYING TO WRITE his work *Dream from Pon's Comet*, he was recalling what had been happening up until now.

This piece of writing was to become a sequel to his previous work *A Little Sophist*. In general Emile's colleagues had, except for the few who were detained in the same grades, all graduated within tenth place. But it was counting up from the bottom. The school's generosity 30 years after its founding by Dr. Lambuth, who was director of South Methodist Church, was probably (this was also) *ending*. On the occasion of getting rid of this 'Night Before Group,' this liberal school utterly turned into something whose objective was to gain a high rate of acceptance by upper-level schools. His half-autobiographical creative work tried to describe the late atmosphere near its ending, the dialogue between him and 'F' for example, or the issue of whether the end of space is a point or a surface, or an incident that happened among a set that emerged like bats the instant lamps were lit in the evening, or Emile's inescapable solitary image of promenading; the document was like that, so it began with, 'It is a lie that you would fall in love with another person's personality or disposition or thoughts. We all fall in love with a tiny habit of eyes or mouth on another person. There are some who fall in love even with a button on a person's shoes' a hundred and thirty or so pages kept continuing without paragraph breaks.

He was not a literary aspirant, but he also didn't know what to do, and a nihilism which wasn't telling him what to do caused him to write, to a first-rate magazine editor in Tokyo a letter saying, 'Would you take a look at my writing?' Even if his request was met, he originally asked for it, so this was not worth rejoicing over. Even if it didn't go well, essentially *this world* was made to work like this, so this was also a matter of course, he would tell himself. "Right, that is the essence of Zen after all" some people said, but in Emile's philosophy, the difference between things or affairs essentially must not exist. They are really the same thing if they are two opposing parties. In everything, nothing is beyond 'it is merely what it is.'



But this information — in the manner as with Mme Guyon for example — came clearly into his awareness almost twenty years later.

By the way, there was a response from Tokyo, and the manuscript was sent, but nothing happened after all. But the ending part of the manuscript, because it was difficult to throw away, developed into a couple of dozen fablish fragments. At that time, 'I' was commuting to the Central Post Office in Kobe because of his family situation; he skipped work, and frequently came to visit Emile, bringing lunch with him. One day 'I' told him about Mr. H. S. who had recently risen to literary world prominence, with his works such as *Fingerprints*, or *A Beautiful Town*, or *The House of a Spanish Dog*. "H. S. says" the friend said while walking down the street, "he doesn't like the sun light, and writes novels under lamp lights with the shutters closed" As soon as he was told this, he started feeling like showing his collection of fables to this new writer. 'I myself am so free that I would like to vanish away. However, if some king would take me away and put me in a basket or something then I would think up as many interesting stories as I could . . . . . such a thing would be far from it' He wrote H. S.

— But look, people become astronomers in fables only when they have no interest in life. Look how Baalhazor, who left the Queen of Sheba, would research the stars climbing up on a tower' he also added. There was an immediate response from Tokyo. 'Indeed, just as you said, when I was reading what you have written one at a time, each has a fashionable taste like an hors d'œuvre, or it feels like after having a very good smelling cigarette' with big letters, written on a yellow-ruled copped paper. If you have something other than this that you have written, show me right away; if you want to put these together as a book, I can be of help, it continued. As a post script, 'I'm also —, thinking about the story of a man who is sick of life, sick of the arts, has walked around the world looking for things he might like, and he buys a necktie in London after all and comes back, and about a person, saying human will power is weak, there is nothing he can do, and keeps growing a beard and shaving it off' he wrote. Here, to Emile who was a so-called 'Twilight Person' according to H. S., a dawning of light was about to happen. He came up to Tokyo. Mr. H. S., who had thin ivory-lined pince-nez, facing him, when a red shaded light stand, which had been bought in Ginza that day, was lit, said in very high spirits. "Now, let's indulge ourselves in the vision of Pon's Comet"

— It was in the fall of 1920, the conception of the idea of the work was that when Emile had still lived in his father's house, and went out to the port city almost everyday, and intoxicated with the Blue Bird Movies, the slim Havana cigar, and a flapping necktie tangled in a night breeze of the last train on his slightly drunken face, 'The Season of the City on a June Night' and newspapers were chatting up about Comet Pon's approach. That night the meteor showers were said to be spectacular. But the night when that very comet came closest to the earth, coming down from a hillside slope looking at the lights leaking from the cabin of an anchored ship, Emile happened to remember and looked up, but what he saw was only the night sky in the rainy season dyed in the color of a silk tree flower reflected from the mid-town city lights underneath. But in the corner of his mind, one vision kept fermenting.

*In the city at the end of the world, spring time one year,  
— It was unclear if it had started from April Fool's Day,  
but a mysterious club was organized. Without anybody's  
proposal, a strange group was formed, causing rumors,  
and by the time the summer came it had disintegrated by  
itself. People called this the 'Red Comet Club'; it was  
based on an illusion which the club members had  
witnessed, at the end of June when the club saw its peak.  
Which is to say Pon's Comet had come down, and at  
midnight when its tail had touched the earth a kind of  
mirage had appeared. It was unknown if it were shown  
on a screen, or in a sort of a vial which a Medium would  
use in a dark room; but at any rate it was interpreted as a  
city which had emerged onto a pitch black horizon. In the  
dreams of opium takers all things are said to be magnified  
ten or twenty times their real size; this mirage was also an  
enormous amount of buildings that were unfit to be seen  
by the naked eye. On the side of the geometric shapes  
which could be described as mosques papered in the  
Cubist technique, interesting shadows are projected onto  
each of them, but where the lights are coming from is  
not at all determinable. And from the background of this  
fabulous city, like the wings of peacocks, seven-colored  
searchlights were shooting out faintly in all directions as*



seen in the feathers of an ephemeron, turning without sound, inviting a pleasant lonesomeness; his body was under suspicion of vanishing somewhere, and he was feeling the infinite units of time that would be passing right at that moment. — In this way, it felt like only a few minutes, but it actually might have been several thousand years, or a few dozen thousand years. In a time very far away. — This was because, the city being clearly reflected upside-down, felt like it was on a terribly calm sea surface, but on the second horizon that was supposed to be extending beyond it, something like a red battle ship was about to appear. This red boat was one of the ships that had been engaging in a sea battle for some months, on the dreary third horizon farther away. It was confirmed by the most prominent member of the Red Comet Club, Sir Arthur Stanley-Corrington, quite a while ago.

Sir Arthur was a vice admiral with many distinguished services to his credit. On one maneuver in spring, a brass bullet went right by his body, and they said his brain had been injured ever since. And in fact, he was recuperating in a white villa at the tip of this cape. One midnight, he recognized a flash from a tracer-bullet type of thing on the far away horizon in front of him, and he heard what seemed to be an explosion of a large caliber cannon. Similar firing sounds came every other night, traveling from the same direction at the same time. By and by it became clear to Sir Arthur that there had been two fleets that had been circling, making big circles which were crossing each other, over the horizon right in front of the cape. And he also noticed that the circles drawn by the two formations encountering every twelve hours this side and the other side, were drawing respective spirals, and that their centers were moving toward the cape. At midnight, when he expected something would be seen that night, At last! Sir Arthur recognized two formations of fleets creeping up toward each other from the right and the left side of the midnight horizon. One was blue, the other was

red, and they were glowing like noctiluca, visible even in the dark. It looked like it was their final battle. In an instant the dark curtain of the night was ripped apart, turning into the stage of a huge sea battle as if it were a glimpse of a different world. . . . . The ships were in disorder, blowing out flames like lumps of natrium thrown onto the water surface, dancing madly. The firings from both parties were exchanged like the continuous sound coming from an internal combustion engine. He looked through binoculars, spotting some ships with their masts broken, shattered bridges, blown out funnels. A listed battleship blew up its rising white smoke of the end, sank down into the bottomless pit. The scene was reflecting upside down on a mirrory water surface, its beauty multiplied twice over. Incidentally the gold coin-colored half moon which had just risen was observing it with a cigarette in its mouth. In the end everything was messy, ridiculous, like a toy box had been emptied out, a mêlée like a fire in a wholesale fireworks outlet. . . . . Blue ships and red ships, they were all gone. And on a much too large mirror-like surface with remaining embers, only one battleship, towing two lines of ripples from the stern, like a red beetle, staggering, but with all its might, showing its depth of determination not to collapse until the end of the entrusted mission, was seen moving in his direction more dead than alive. Realizing the fact that none of the people in town had noticed this at all, and that only he had been aware of it since the previous night, and this night also he had been watching this, Sir Arthur felt his pulse unconsciously, he drew his curtain on his window in consternation . . . . . but, near the roseate dawn, he crept up near the window and had a peek at the sea, and he was about to swoon. In the inlet under him, as if taking repose, the red battle cruiser was mooring. On top of its masthead a strange three-colored flag was mounted, in the tranquil morning as far as he could see, the smoke from each funnel was rising straight up, but only the flag was flapping like an animated being!



*Ever since, in the cape town, there were those who went around saying that they saw these things they couldn't have actually seen, and the number of witnesses gradually increased. Authorities maintained strict control over the matter by taking every single person who had mentioned the battleship into custody, and committing them to a white house at the edge of the cape, an insane asylum. And this very Sir Arthur himself was the glorious first in-patient. The end.*

— The story was disrupted in the middle like this, but according to Emile, the red battle cruiser that Sir Arthur had seen must have been the same one that had appeared in the mirage of the Red Comet Club, and it also must have been the one that had been seen from the stunt 'Sky Dragon' above the San Francisco-like future city. — but club members could catch no signs of a ship after all. Instead, like Sir Arthur on the first night, they heard firing sounds coming from somewhere far away on the sea. The extravagant wooden-block city, as if it was a picture drawn on a single-leafed screen, showed a spasmodic shaking. Then up above, a soul-faintly beautiful strikingly red-hot cannon was seen, soaring, drawing a big arc so slowly that it was noticeable to the eye. The true-red grazing cannon came just above the city and suddenly suspended in mid-air then exploded. The pieces stuck closely in space like a flower blooming and right there a new bullet was born. It swam in circles as if probing its surroundings, then as if it were a short pencil, starting from the left edge of the city-scape moving diagonally upward, on the stripe-patterns of still glimmering searchlights, conjuring a once-in-a-thousand-year's flowering of a kind of orchid family, spelled out an astonishing calligraphy — The Red Comet City. At that moment, witnesses became aware that the Cubismistic huge city was, actually, a mountainous skeleton that was lying on its one elbow.

— but, this skeleton wasn't his favorite, come to think of it. Then what should it be instead? The idea of the Red Comet Club kept being revised whenever it came to his mind. When 'I' heard this idea, "It sounded like a dream of a boy living somewhere like Poland" he said. Since then fifteen years had passed. And if the 'Mirage of Sir Arthur' was destined to be abandoned without taking any shape, but with the worrisome skeleton at the conclusion, finally it had been met by the most fitting replacement.

It was a picture he had seen at the house of a leisurely couple where he had been visiting almost every day. Sitting on a round platform, slender and thin-waisted like the thickness of an arm, a Bodhisattva was resting one elbow on the right leg placed on the left leg, directing the fingertips of the hand to the cheek, contemplating something with a slightly vicious smile. It said it was from Li Dynasty Three Kingdoms period; Emile looked it up in an encyclopedia, and learned that this Bodhisattva could not stand up because the time has not yet arrived; that's why there were only seated or lying figures. He had often heard about it, this being a subject quoted in grandmothers' stories or oft-told anecdotes, but still, he found out that it was the very thing that had been calling forth the feeling of future surpassing even the latest bit of modern civilization every time he had encountered it.

The previous night Emile saw off the wife of that house, and was walking on a newly completed, pitch-black broad asphalt road which hadn't been equipped with street lights. He had been fascinated with astronomy since childhood. And he could say he knew a little bit about comets and nebula, but he hadn't been interested in the general constellations. First it seemed pupil-like, and he had accepted that it would not get past the limit of being a hobby at best. More than anything else, it had to be 'The star strewn sky is *my constellation*' (Schopenhauer). These last few years, however, major highway extensions had started, and empty areas with few lights had been expanding on the east and west sides. Emile had often walked through these areas, and there was a longing of wanting to interpret the outlines of the beautiful nightly picture scroll unfolding itself like the dark night in a castle town a long time ago. And it took about one year. By this time he could identify most of the mythical people, monsters, animals, and utensils inlaid on the black iron cupola at any time of the season. He was telling his companion that night one of these picture stories. For a beautiful woman anything would be suitable, he thought. Is it because just like music, this counterpart has the most concrete and at the same time a supremely abstract existence? It was unusual that he didn't have even a touch of alcohol that night. It might have been because before long, he was feeling he had to say good-bye to this town facing the strait familiar to him ever since his childhood, and there was some faint feeling of satisfaction. "What is civilization" Emerson's words came to his mouth spontaneously. "What is civilization? I answer, it is the cooperation from respectable women" — To him a very long time ago, so far-off in the past



that it was impossible to remember, under the big stars sparkling like tonight as if a bouquet had been undone, wearing sandals, it felt like he had walked with tonight's companion once before. It was probably a town in Athens or Corinth. There, to the illusory companion, he would leisurely question —

"I feel like I have walked with you like this before"

"Right, I was really feeling the same way. — I wonder how long has it been since that time?"

"It must have been a considerable time ago" he again, would look up over his head. The stars scattering there should, compared to the ones that had been seen before, moreover compared to the ones he was actually looking up at, be stranger things. There had been a similar dream he occasionally had.

Up from a hill somewhere, alone with a black shadow, — The shadow seemed like a person from the Old Testament, but it could well have been a devil. Lured out by this unknown person at night, he was looking out from such a deserted lonely hilltop, from the horizon to the top, the stars extended, making clusters further and further away. He couldn't help thinking it was getting serious. Because they were completely different from the usually-seen constellations. Like a stipulation, they were monstrous, and were small hand-made latticework sorts of things; among these there were some similar to natrium and manganese crystallizations; on one hand there were very simple squares or triangles or zigzags; there were some complicated things which could not have been drawn by any of the avant-garde geometrists in the world. Further and further away, such lattices intermittently linked together in a clear vertical expansion, conveying each of which was closer than others, or more distant. Besides, they spilled down here and there like raindrops sliding down the surface of a glass window not having to be able to hold it anymore, with an interval during which you could generally spot a meteor on a summer night. They would suspend themselves in different positions and make new formations with renewed style — They would also slip down, or slowly creep up, and appendix with the existing ones, weaving different three-dimensional lattices . . . . . It seemed like some preparation was slowly in progress. One time, constituent elements of these latticeworks were becoming a huge tree branch shape covering the sky, hanging over head just like a galaxy monster. At the tips of these winding branches there were numerous sparkling flowers, which were indecently gorgeous, or like veins in a

womb about to organize themselves into a novel form that had never existed anywhere, and extending widely, taking an ominous arabesque pattern. — It could already be called a night sky like that. Or, it hadn't reached that point yet, but it was fair to say that its sign could have been seen. And, a long time ago, nebula which had been calculated as billions on the vault surface had now deviated far over infinite-lines, and they could be dimly observed capping red filters on a big telescope, or taken as ghosts from the far past by scholars. With these in mind, look, let's suppose these calamities had taken place for a member of regional fixed star-systems in our galaxy.

"There is no mistake — It's about time"

So he said, but he didn't understand time for what, so he couldn't help adding —

"If, there was any achievement of the planet called earth, it would be only one thing, to have issued a prophecy of a future Buddha"

"You take the earth so lightly . . . . . I wonder if it is all right" she interjected discontentedly.

"Here we are, look" he stopped. Because they had entered a spacious place just like the hills which had appeared in his dreams. The Milky Way was thrusting aslant into this horizon of the waste land. This pale belt which penetrated the cupola had been, showing several cracks from the time when these two had been walking in towns in Greece, but now these were notable, indicating a remarkable expansion as if they were about to break away from those areas.

"In the crack, at the bottom of the inlet, you may see a somewhat yellowish star. There, its light just stays and doesn't flicker —" he pointed at it.

"— I wish I had brought binoculars. Then, we could have easily seen that the moon had come to pieces, and is encircling that star like a ring of Saturn. By the way, I could show you where America and Asia have changed places"

"It seems like a lonely star" after looking in its direction for a while, the lady looked back.

"It is the earth. Where we used to have conversations . . . . ."

He spoke and right when he turned around, both her hands were pressed against her face.

"It's unbecoming of you!" Somewhat bewildered with the effect of his spontaneous joke, he said, "There is nothing lonely about this. Or maybe



isn't this rather refreshing, like getting some air? Even that tiny planet ought not to be exempt from salvation"

The next day, having looked at the copper-print photograph, and having looked it up in an encyclopedia in passing, Emile realized what he should have said at that moment. "I told you a lie last night" he should have revealed. "Ever since we spoke to each other in the town of Athens gazing up the stars, look, it says in here. 56 billion and 70 million years have passed. In the midst of the void where Buddha's voice travels back and forth like a reed of a loom, this galactic system rotated dozens of times. Of course the earth vanished ages ago. If that yellow star is the earth, it must be the offspring after some generations — No, a completely different, new sibling"

## Part II The Graveside House

In a desolate and empty upstairs room in a graveside house deformed to such a degree — the pen holder would keep tumbling to one side; Emile waited in the morning for noon to come, — If the siren at noon sounded it already became considerably easier to spend the day. And when evening came, the time until sleep had been managed to be spent. . . . . spending days like these. He had sold all the bedding. In its place, he had taken down an old Indian cotton curtain, and was covering himself; here beside his pillow was a half-broken *Genkai* dictionary that had been given to him, from which some pages were missing. Out of its pages, he was mainly looking up words related to Buddhism. It wasn't that he was aspiring to Mount Sumeru, but rather a simple experiment on Kantan's dream-pillow. Because, compared to the things streaming in the inner world, the revolution of the earth, which heaved up the sun, and pushed it down over the rooftops on the opposite side drawing a big rainbow shape to the yonder end of heaven, was terribly slow. This tendency was conspicuous during the night time. One hour shifted, expending the former two hours' length. If it was the occasion when he was dozing off, the few days in his shallow dream were not equivalent to even a half hour in the outside world. — Instead, in such life, the evening drum was heard just a little while after he woke up, in the salvation army next to a public bath with its towering chimney over the window. In other words, for him, one week was passing with the impression of being only two or three days. One day he found a small booklet with an olive cover on a shelf of a used book store on a car line he had frequently visited to get 10 Sen or 20 Sen. The content was an introduction to the development of scientific space theories



over those past fifteen years. As usual he didn't have even 5 Sen with him, but he had asked the owner if he could borrow this book until 3 o'clock. During those few hours, new astonishments were brought to him. He had once read a true dandyism, in the portraits of Riemann or Lobachevsky, that he had seen on a page of mathematical books; but now Friedmann or Le Maistre, or Dr. de Sitter who had come up with the very single hyperbolic surface model of space, they were just a few as could be counted on the finger of one hand, but the attempt to apply the achievement of modern geometry to the elucidation of the structure of space, (what a wonderful intelligence), made him glad thinking about it as if it were his personal issue, he couldn't just stay in his place, went down the steep steps, and borrowed an introductory book on geometric conversions from the owner of the house who was an old mathematician. Lately it seemed that something was about to change inside him, but it was really true he thought. He would casually throw away a match. And it would always, even if it wasn't on a table top or anything, land standing. Sometimes a match and a small box of cigarettes would pile up like building blocks.

— He had thought this must be a climax around here, it had kept going on like this for over ten years. But the climax hadn't seemed like one at all, and he never had climbed up there; in the meantime he had kept slipping down without stopping. On the contrary, it could be called a terrifying low-altitude flight wriggling over a gorge. But it hadn't reached the point of coming into contact with the ground and causing a fire. Three years before, when he had cleared out of the place of his childhood, he had thought this was finally the upshot. There were no relatives. He was completely alone, and some people gathered that he was facing suicide. Trains, or from a rooftop of a department store, or a swallow of potassium cyanide: it was unknown, but they seemed to be thinking that; it was the natural course of his deeds. So they would ask Emile if there were any insurance contracts to be relinquished, and how often were the payments being made? Anyway, if you could hand it over to me I could at least do the annual ceremonies for you. Why don't you cling to so and so from somewhere that you say you love and jump onto a railroad crossing. He had been given up on that much. But in those days, he still had some clothes and the bedding to sleep on. All these turned to Sake in cups, and the night when he bought a ticket to Tokyo as if running away, he still had had the money, 2 Yen, at the bottom of his kimono sleeve. But, that lined kimono, also a haori coat, and a cloth waist-band had all disappeared, and

now there was nothing around him but an unlined tight-sleeved kimono, a cloth tape around his waist, and a towel and a wash basin and a pillow, a damaged dictionary, and a pair of clogs: these were actually his entire possessions. At least it was fortunate that a blue ceiling wasn't added to these.

Ink, soap, comb, toothbrush, they used to be around here. But there was a pawn shop that could keep even these for 10 Sen or 20 Sen; he had put these in. He could change a bundle of his rough drafts, into 30 Sen or 40 Sen at a sympathetic store. Would people call this a contrivance of a Robinson Crusoe in a shady alley? Well, it couldn't be said that it wasn't a life on a desert island. For example, trying to smoke a cigarette he would notice the match box was empty. He would look for it outside and at last find one, left outside someone's backdoor. It was damp. But his room would have electricity even in the daytime, he would be able to warm it up with a light bulb and strike it. A piece of laundry soap, or a grip of powder soap, could be given if he asked for it, or he could make away with it, for not having a haori coat, he could pretend like he just went out casually with a towel on his shoulder. The *Genkai* dictionary was to be useful there. 'Those who renounced their illusions of views and of thought and receive the blessings from people and the world, they are called Arhat' — Lately if there was a thing which could be changed into one 10 Sen nickel coin around him, it made him restless, was a burden. There had been some occasions where he could have obtained an appliance like a charcoal brazier or a desk or a kettle. But, usually they had been sold, or gone to the pawn shop on the same day. And along with this admonition, 'Never take anything that was not given to you' he was about to understand, 'Things are always fully useful when they are kept to a minimum' At any rate this airship was on the verge of crisis. The load must be dropped. And for the crew, a restorative brandy more than anything else. — But, he hadn't thought about getting necessities, resorting to anti-social behavior. The likelihood was if he was to be committed to a prison or an insane asylum, — there were those who actually urged it. Better he be laid on a floor in an unnatural death morgue: the problem would be solved. But it wasn't permitted to happen. Thus, the alcohol addiction to which "You had it" people in the coast town had commented on it, uncovered its limit.

Emile, concerning his self which had been slipping down this far without knowing, did not have any feeling of regret. It is not only the Samurais of the Meiji Restoration who lost their living immediately when they cut the tether-chain. Before all things, he had come down here naturally, and



it was impossible to think that the current situation could have been changed by his power at all. If it could have been changed, it would have taken place a long time ago. On his last stay in Tokyo, there was a poor boy with nowhere to turn living near him; he suddenly clung to Emile, "You seem like you would say good-bye, and go away somewhere" he would cry; he was already an adult now, and was a waiter in a basement restaurant around Marunouchi. This person would often bring over left-over bread, or cold meat, or apples, or boiled eggs, or seemingly specially thick slices of ham, or bottled Sake. Emile would never forget for the rest of his life the taste of the rice ball in a box lunch, delivered after one midnight. But this young man finally said, "There's no change at all every time I come here" appalled by the desolation of the upstairs room of the graveside house which hadn't shown any sign of changes. "There is nothing I can say about this" he let out. Probably because Emile was toying with 'The Final Mood,' he was given up by this person. Although there was a delusion on this person's part. The Marunouchi restaurant waiter was the same as somebody, only thinking that things in life would somehow end up fine, and should be dealt with in some way. But what could be done about a monster called a *current situation*? It would be some kind of miracle if you were able to realize what a present situation was. In the windowpanes in his room, there were countless small bubbles if he looked carefully. Among these there was only one foam, which functioned as a spectrum. Every time he had looked from different angles, making him wonder if there had been such beautiful colors on earth, it sent out a gorgeous red, a translucent blue green, or his favorite, Parnassian violet, beautiful beyond description. It was a variable star that he had discovered. It always takes pain to find a minute star. But if fed up with such observations, one can open the window and lie down on the Tatami floor. A window is the very fresh page made for daily reading. Like this we are always sitting in the very midst of the infinite spiritual treasure vault. This upstairs room without a toilet is perfect for looking out at heaven. And instead of thinking about things on earth, was I born to look at the movements of the stars or the colorations of the clouds? — If so, a cloud making the passing of time forgettable, — various shapes of clouds pass about which 'I like the cloud traveling over there' one French poet sang . . . . .

Around the old blackened house, which was said to have been built at the end of the Meiji period, in summer time, there were geckos everywhere. There were often sounds of pebbles hitting a graveyard's tin fence,

thrown at geckos by children. The first baby gecko that had fallen onto his shoulder simultaneously with the lightning had surprised him, but he was used to it by now. What a peaceful being, he thought. In fact, at night, finding the small fellows sticking to the surface of the gate lights as if drawn with a black ink, "Wow, cute" there were sometimes white faces staring at them. Outside the polished glass, there was one clinging with suckers on each fingers extended, trying to trace the outline, and as soon as he moved the tip of a pencil on the coarse side facing him, the thing ran away in surprise, and it certainly didn't show up again for at least three days. Incidentally, small insects gathering under the lamp light, in these hours, would whisper revelations that couldn't be found in larger beings. I wonder who taught to love the small rather than large ones? Elves or small nymphs or small beings in *A Midsummer's Dream* must have been gleaned from these insects, he thought, but it was a strange thing to him, come to think of it. Even ones with feathers, he hadn't liked the insect family in general, and this unknowable set, without a means to tame them, had been scary as high-voltage power lines. — Besides, several kinds of birds spend time in the graveyard during the daytime, or pigeons, or butterflies, or spotted cats, or a Black Kite soaring high gliding: these were pleasant to look at.

Since he had come up to Tokyo this time, it had taken about five months till he had rented an old house up on the cliff around Ushigome. He had happened to pass through these former feudatory residence quarters with many trees on his way back from a nearby publisher one day; he felt he would like it around there. There was the historical spot of Shoku San Jin, in front of the apartment with blue roof tiles, which he had decided would be his place for the time being; across from the graveyard of the temple, there was Koyo Ozaki's house. A reddish yellow Art Club, where a famous New Drama actress who was hailed during the end of Meiji period and the beginning of the Taisho period was said to have hanged herself, stood unchanged. On the same street there was an old brewery: on a now big and bulging rectangular sign, which was a consequence of having pasted one paper upon another every year, 'Government Licensed Shochu' in large letters, and the store front was a bar serving crude Sake or Shochu spirits. He once heard about an old poet who had frequented this tavern for forty years. This person was now in an old people's home in Itabashi, but his name was familiar from childhood. The letter from the once passionate poet who was now confined came almost three times a week to the



owner of the tavern, as well as to his beloved grandson; near the counter in the back of the tavern, the owner had showed him a poem that the poet had written on a post card, him recalling the days when he was a student in tattered trousers, walking down Kagurazaka-Slope under the moon swinging a thick stick, / Going around the old Kagurazaka Echoing clogs Was a real man / — Quartier Latin in Paris would have been a place like this, he would imagine. Actually, dreams were standing around these hilltop quarters. And the public bath and Berber's and the tobacco store had some kind of a reserve. If he just asked, they would pleasantly give him credit. "If you don't know the taste of their Shochu, you're not a grown-up" a carpenter with a towel around his neck was saying. "We all must go through trouble. The guys that just cling to their own wives, they're damned! If you're not like me, losing my wife, losing my folks, losing my brothers and sisters, and in the end selling myself for money, out of the question — everything starts from there" — "Oh, then you don't read newspapers at all? That's great. That's an attitude of adepts nowadays" stating this to Emile, impressed, was an old gentleman in a jittoku haori coat with a red nose that was about to crack like a pomegranate.

Women passing through and foliage over the fence had never looked so beautiful and fresh as they did this early summer. Each woman as a flower, or reflected in his eyes as a light green feather of the first cicada. For all that, could these modulations in inner worlds be a sign of breaking to pieces in the air; it was hard to erase the suspicion that this selfish air fighter might have finally been coming to an end. But, death is a thing that comes when there are few reserves left, and in such a tight situation, people would never die. This is according to a wandering painter named 'T' with whom he became acquainted later, "When there are no more means as to what to do, when all the world is in complete darkness, human beings are truly living the best. Sparks of life are being given off" aren't they? In such a way if it was right or wrong at this moment, as long as he moved his body, there was some benefit. Because he had sunk to the bottom, a stirring would mean that much floating. If it can be said that there was a natural development that had been brought out to him in such a situation, what was the most potent force in bringing it? From the terrible trammels of the alcohol spirit-marriage into which he had treated himself, what was the most effective in liberating Emile from it? He would reply without hesitation — It was the fasting.

Of course it was done unavoidably. But: "Nothing is compared to their strength when people are doing unavoidable deeds" according to the aforementioned painter. And even a few days' fasting could make one notice the negative world which is usually covered up. Although it takes some training to try this. For example, he was still suffering from a question of what to eat in the evening, if he put something in his mouth during daytime. By the way, in the further past, the meals had been once in three days, but there had been alcohol around the clock. And even on these occasions, listening to a saying, "If the rice is delicious you don't need anything else" he would exasperate, "Then if the water is delicious you can do without eating anything!" But now, his past arrogance was beginning to be reconsidered. He was grateful to obtain left-overs. He was growing sensible as to finding out that left-over food was the most delicious, and also about a carrot or cabbage or daikon or cucumber, the true taste had been shining in the very odds and ends which one would throw away and not look back at. He still had however, a remaining thought that he had to swallow something solid once a day. Reconsidering, he had discovered that this thought was groundless, and he tried not to go to a house he had been visiting usually once in three days to accept a treat; then for the first time a vast and boundless new universe had been glimpsed.

Among all the pitifulnesses in the world, nothing would be more frail than eating things in dreams. Spoons or chopsticks would be moving busily, and sometimes without knowing it — like gibels gasping for air under the surface of a pond — he would notice he was biting the edge of the old curtain as makeshift bedding, but not a drop or a grain was actually going through his throat. The metaphor of the Hungry Ghost Realm where the food would turn into smoke as soon as they try to put it into their mouth was a really good one, he thought. There were a lot of different dreams with food, all painful and sad, but they remarkably resembled fables, he had been noticing.

He was once standing next to a mailing post on a street at dawn, waiting for freshly cooked rationed rice. One time the Anthem of the United States was playing, he thought it was a junction-piece by Sousa but it wasn't so, and actually, it was home-style cooking or sweets from each state appearing together with the shift of the melody — that is, a waffle with hat-dressing delicious to look at, or a sponge cake, or cookies or cream pie sorts of things. People talk about food, clothing, and shelter, but I would like to be a cook rather than a bathhouse attendant, he thought in a dream. And the cook who makes sweets. An apprentice for a baker with a white hat on



the head would do. It is to their benefit that they can put one or two sweets in their mouth in their spare time. And crackers or candies could pass as oil paintings, he would reason. One night, at the end of summer, mushrooms in a basket had appeared. After waking up, aside from the pan of Sukiyaki which had been drawn by the illusion, what about the actual smell of mushrooms hanging in the air, he thought, and noticed that near his pillow there was an insecticide given to him the previous day. It was the volatile smell from it that had influenced him. But these frail illusions would, within a limit of two or three nights, just like the dream in Mme Guyon's case, make their exit. In his case instead, sailing battle-ships soaring in the sky — the air fleet that had crossed over the wilderness, would pass above high treetops, directly facing the sunlight; the light cast toward hundreds or thousands of sails with interesting shapes would highlight the shadows of numerous complicated plaits on their surface, weaving a euphony, tempting him to shout in admiration: he remembered it well. — Things like that, or, those illusions were transformed to irregular fragments of colors, a red-brown and a green — it was interpreted as Biela's comet, which was said to have been disintegrating, and after showering spectacular meteors, disappeared — those fragments gradually emerged from the depth of space, illuminating indescribable splendid colors. And then, "Nothing is more interesting in the world than the dream we see during the night" he had to come up with these words that his wandering elder had muttered.

While he was awake — his spectacles were in the pawn shop, so he must have been watching 'the things that hopefully should have been' rather than actual existing things, but the food in the stores frequently came to his eyes. Things he had once seen in Nankin Town in the back of Motomachi in Kobe, glittering smoked pork, or fruits in sugar pots, or flower-shaped crackers which were now actually displayed in a Russian cake shop above Kagurazaka Slope . . . . . or there was no need to recall such fancy things; now one stem of green onion, a carrot, a fried azuki bun, cheap sweets, dried sardines, preserved nori sea grass, red ginger pickles, tangerines, every single one of them looked irresistibly delicious. He felt dried daikon was a delicious thing, and discovered cheap rejected bonito flakes. One day before noon, Emile passed through a market in Lower Yarai, and was surprised by its abundance. It was near a big printing factory, therefore most of the people who had been congesting the narrow strip were housewives of the workers, the antecedents indicated by each

face; and the dreams of human pleasures that were unfolding around these, had reminded him of an extravagant market in the *Arabian Nights*. Right, next time I would bring a big wrapping cloth, and: green onions, fried tofu patties, dried codfish, apples, scallions, he would buy them up, about 20 Yen in all, but at the same time he would notice each gracious food in its own right, how abundantly they were consumed by even the most parsimonious housewife. He himself had been suffering from guilt whenever he ate white rice. Because if something was in the stomach, that was all there was to it, but still having to worry about a fish meat patty, sashimi, baked eggs, the human greed would not stop, he would feel repulsion. The wastefulness would be proven by the content of buckets waiting for a cart making a tour ringing a bell every morning. One time, Emile saw a middle-aged woman crouching down to one of these buckets. Holding under her arm something wrapped in newspapers, she was not untidy, her cloth a summer kimono cleaner than his outfit. Then he wondered what she was doing: as soon as she stood up, a stem of cucumber was picked out of her mouth and thrown away. It was still hot, early autumn, and that's why it suggested how the pith of the cucumber slipped down into her throat had been cold, and delicious. That's fashionable! Emile thought.

The food available at each occasion serves enough purpose as human food. Consider how we feel, after finishing a feast, thinking about what a bad thing we have done. Then, of course, what kind of action should be taken? It is not limited to materials, but also to spiritual things, to acquire a habit of staying within the minimum. If you say you cannot stop at will, then you always have to think about stopping. When one is not aware of this, it invites *dilapidation*. — In these contexts, if it doesn't disturb the public safety, it is acceptable to open a waste bucket lid, Emile was feeling. On the car line under his residence, there were parking spaces for the mornings' garbage-collection carts in question. Seeing the barrels lined up there around noon, seeing white cabbage heaped up high, or the green of leaves, or the red of carrots, or other color schemes like *marble twills*, he wouldn't resist stopping to have a look. How beautiful these things had looked! 'The potato flower is the queen of flowers' Rodin had said, these very garbage barrels in the mornings must have been *the king's barrels* which are qualified to be the subject of the great painting by a genius.

— Around the third day of fasting, there would appear a depression around the eyes, the voice would become hoarse, and people's faces would start to look double or triple. The legs would be as weak as a Beggar-bonze



with a spear on a bridge. But at the same time, the thing which could be brought only by the *refused compromise*, a fearless horizon, would begin to open. In the corner of his mind, he must have wished this state would continue longer, but usually on these fourth days — at least in those days — without fail, things to put in his mouth would come to him by some means, and under these circumstances he couldn't even achieve one tenth of the fasting record that says that there would be no problem for forty days. "You won't be possessed thanks to the fasting; at this opportunity if you could end up at 60 pounds or something, then you'd be tired of having too much contribution from too many spectators" one person said. One day he came across 'K. I.' and, "Who'd be surprised by that!" hearing things about the fasting, he said angrily, "Of course it wouldn't matter if you'd done anything; do the work instead. Don't write anything stupid. If you're doing your work, if you're a thief like Villon or a murderer, it doesn't matter" "You say write, write, but what are you supposed to write" Emile asked. "I don't know. You could create anything. Don't say nonsense like you don't have any materials" — This 'K. I.' as soon as he had graduated from a French literature course in a Foreign Language University, was invited to teach at a higher school in Kyushu Island; after less than a year he had participated in a Red incident, and had to leave. It had been fifteen years since then, but as to where and how he made his living, Emile didn't have a clue, and neither did anybody else. When people were gathering, if he was asked to help in going to a liquor store, "I don't drink so I don't like to do it" this 'I' would say and wouldn't move. Then when plates and flasks would be lined up on the table, and if anyone would offer a Sake, he would take the cup without saying anything. He would act like this so some people used to complain, but it is legitimate not to do things like going on an errand to a liquor store, Emile had recently come to realize. Because, if you were engaged in an errand like that, you would, after all, end up a person existing for such business. — Thus in the outside world, the only discovery was that in front of the exposed radiator of automobiles in general, uniform coverings like fencing masks had started to be attached, the year ended. But, right after the new year he ended up dragging a terrible thing out of himself.

He knew it was none other than a Devil. He had made some new friends around Kagurazaka; one of the young men had been staying over at his room with his pay envelope in hand. Drinking lasted about a week because of this, but lately he began noticing, when he had one cup of

strong spirits upon another, that a singular confidence that had never existed before would arise within himself. A memory of seemingly drinking in some far away outskirts of town without having any money would come back to life. A bill that he had no recollection of would be presented to him from a small bar in the neighborhood. Right ahead of the street of the Upper Yurai, the Otsuka street-car line or lamp-lit Higashi-Nakano Station would usually appear; it happened one night that thinking it was around Suidobashi and he had gotten off, gradually fields had started to expand on both sides, then the short night would glow, faintly luminous over an Urawa signpost. It could be put like this: as if he were passing into other people's living rooms without dropping in with arms folded. Naturally there would be a reaction. The soul must be tempered with suffering and misery. We have to keep fighting against obstacles, for the advancement of our soul; however, this could not be achieved without protection from higher spirits. Therefore, if it was believed that deeds were caused by true spirits, there would be no problem in repeating repentance for the rest of our lives. Bad spirits could be driven away temporally but they don't just vanish once and for all, therefore we should work on purifying them instead, by carrying the bad spirits on ourselves. 'Accepting some filth from the nation is an ordinary lordship, but to accept the disgrace of the nation makes for a true king of the world' this was his favorite in Lao Tzu, on his stay in Tokyo this time.

When one comes to one's senses that the alcohol need not be stopped is the only time when people are liberated from alcohol, he believed. If not, you have to confess that any struggle must always end in failure. In these cases, we are obsessed with the idea that we must find our way out by *our own power*. This is like trying to walk in the dark night holding a paper lantern. As a punishment to this arrogance, the Devil appears. — But, this was understood much later, and ever since that new year, he had to be dragged around by the fiendish creature, calling the name of Amitābha repeatedly, or trying to cling to Mother Mary, rubbing his hands together, writhing. I wonder what kind of bad things I have done. Of course I have a lot of debts here and there. And not thinking about paying anything back. Or I might be good at pulling so and so whom I met at Kagurazaka into the tavern, and stripping him naked. But what's the big deal about it? It would be too unfair to decide I am the sort of hoodlum judging from such trivial issues, he would say to himself, but the invisible counterpart didn't have any reservations. WA! to shout and get outside; his



body was withered up without having had regular solid food for a few days, and he wouldn't have the strength to arise and get water. It was impossible to stay lying down now, though. Above his pillow there was a small person with a red flame expression on its face, so that he could not recognize its outline clearly; it had been eagerly dancing around for some time. Still there were moments when he would doze off in extreme fatigue, a person who had peeked in at his sleeping face later told him, in exclamation. "What a face you had, I thought you'd never make it to heaven" — Horror bearing down upon him, completely numbed out the power of reason, and he was going to choke at any moment. There might be several dead spirits possessing me, he would imagine. In such cases it is impossible to hang yourself. But, after a day or two, he would somewhat recover. But what if there was some alcohol, because it's hard, because it's unbearable, if the nerve to get out would come back, he would scheme on getting a drink at any rate. The following day, the fiendish entity had promptly appeared with a two-fold harsher outlook than the last time. On such occasions he would lose clogs, the light bulb would die. And it led him, already past the degree of general horror, to a ghostly, gruesome, bleak, ominous anticipation as if some calamity might break out at any moment . . . . . "Forgive me!" he couldn't help shouting out. On such mornings, of course a strange air could be felt hanging about, but right when he moved the tongue in his mouth, in spite of himself, a surprise! The night before again — that is, his hands or feet would have never been without scars or cuts, his toe nails on both sides during those few years had been replacing themselves even twice — He had tried to go down stone steps to a car road headfirst, probably arms folded, fell without even having a moment to reach his hands out. This time two incisors broke! The teeth which he had had from childhood, unlike nails, were the two in his upper jaw which would not cut anymore.

"Things like a fiend are in a word beings like a shadow" a chubby poet with whom he had met after a long time said. "— When you thought you had a fiend, you yourself had been becoming a fiend. So, you had better feel sorry for that fiend. To have even one being which you feel sorry for is a thing to be grateful for. Speaking of myself, if there isn't anyone that I feel sorry for, if I sat down to write, I wouldn't be able to write a poem that I would like" — After having listened to this, he had decided, lying on his stomach on the Tatami floor, to write anything. There had been a time when his hand would shake, as if to spill over water from a glass, but lately

it seemed — owing to the fasting — he had recovered to the degree that he could now spell out words. It must be true that work saves people. In a borrowed small paperback from an elder whom he had met at the usual tavern, it was written, 'When you are anxious or depressed, start serious work immediately' thus, Carl Hilty wrote in his journal style description. 'If that is impossible show a small kindness to your neighbor. Instead of giving a formal thing, flowers from your yard, or a handkerchief, or a pocket book, simple presents are better' — To this earnest reader of Hilty, he had opened the conversation first, this gentleman explained that he had once been a student of Kobe Higher Commerce School next to Emile's school, and on the boat team. It was around the time when Emile was in his first-year of middle school. And around that time, in this gentleman's mind, there was nothing other than thick filet meat in the Sukiyaki at 'Mitsuwa' in Motomachi and geisha speers at 'Fukuhara,' but later his mind was directed toward reading and his work. "Work" was a vague word, but *that* is all right as well; it was a thing like this the gentleman had said. And most of his old peers seemed like they were executives today, but he himself hadn't been doing any special thing, and now he was tilting a flask of fine Sake into a small cup. The following day, shouting from the outside, "True Kings are naturally in predicaments, truth indeed!" this gentleman came to visit this apartment with blue roof tiles. The fiend was about to come out for Emile, but with a swollen throat his voice couldn't come out very well. "When we are reborn our voice cracks. Cheer up! Let's have a drink over this" he looked all over the room as he was saying this, and had picked up the only blue shirt hanging on the wall. It had been given to him the other day by a young couple in Myogadani where he had occasionally visited for a treat of meal. But the owner of the secondhand shop in Lower Yarai was away. Well, then the gentleman had turned back, and this time, from an 18 square foot room under a church tower in the back of Akagi Shrine, he pulled off the only bedding and put it in the pawn shop run by the tavern, as an asset for the drink money. It had been returned to the original place few days later, but it also disappeared in time. Following suite, in that upstairs 18 square foot room, small paperbacks, jackets, a small charcoal brazier, cloth waist-bands, shoes at the entrance, would disappear and appear one after another as on a magic show stage. In the cold, the gentleman blazing with a white shirt would be seen on the back of the tavern. Emile was similar. No, there weren't any props in the ever-changing conjuring for him.



There was a haori coat that had been given to him, but after serving a half-day use the coat would go right back to the pawn shop, and it didn't see the sunlight again for over a month. The way he had been sitting in the corner of a tavern like this, on an afternoon under a cold rain, with a slick greasy unlined tight-sleeved kimono with a waist-band for women, he was really a crow in the cold, or could have been a water-imp down on his luck. When he looked like this, he would go back home passing through the alleys with successive turns, children gathered would sometimes scatter away hollering; the ways to divert his mind from this unbearable feeling, that had been mastered by him; to immediately rush into a public bath, or to go to a Berber's, or to clean his room, or to finish laundry; these would do. "A grain of mustard seed can contain Sumeru inside it; where there is nothing there is no limitation of space, one's whole might couldn't become anything but pluck" the old boy of the Kobe Higher Commerce who resembled the shoe maker in Athens in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* cheered Emile up: "But don't look at the graves too much. Think about girls and flowers"

It was already March. All through the day he had been tortured by the fiend, had gotten up his courage, and decided to go to the public bath, staggering: this time it felt like even the adults might have been staring at him. Where would such a lonely feeling like being an alien come from, he had to ask himself again. It seemed extreme that this desolation, of 'forgetting oneself,' if he thought that all human beings were forlorn like this, or that this might have been because of neuroses which only belonged to him. It would never be this harsh a degree for other people — I cannot think but so. Perhaps there is a fundamental defect in me, but in terms of what it is, and how to handle it, there is no clue.

He was far from having the nerve to use soap; after laboriously pulling up from the bath, he carried himself over to the dressing room; as he was drying himself, pressing here and there with the towel, suddenly the five letters SAINT flashed in the back of his mind. There hadn't been this kind of thing whatsoever until this day, and of course he hadn't spoken about it. Only it had been right before his leaving for Tokyo this time. Around the time when an orange color would start to seep in on the eastern horizon, from the platform of the coast-town station (He had to meet someone at Kobe station, and had been standing there) over the still-sleeping rooftops of houses, looking: the horn-shaped moon, Venus, big yellow Jupiter, the three lined up in a row — It looked something like a

scene he had seen in the film of Jesus' chronicles, and he had associated these five letters to this scenery. But what did this word SAINT originally mean? He felt like he had realized the meaning almost instantly. It was not that he himself was a holy man, or that he had to exert himself to be one. Among the human beings like him, there might be people of that kind. There was one who had been crucified among those, he thought. And they truly are humans among humans — they might be diamonds, then the expression *King of the Kingdom of the Heart* is so appropriate, he affirmed to himself. With a celluloid box containing the finally untouched soap clattering under his arm, as he was returning through the alleyways, it seemed to him he could completely understand the reason why Buddha and Christ were so popular.

The fiend had appeared just the same. But every time, as if the ground was settling from repeated aftershocks, or rather similar to a pendulum gradually increasing its amplitude, every time he swung back he seemed to be led into a deeper self-examination at the opposite end. The human soul, once awakened, might experience only progress, and no stagnation or turning back. All human beings, — borrowing the words from *Jean Christophe*, 'even God is still struggling day and night to win this over, like the beech-tree forest nightly rustling' are participating in such total progress. Thus to those who lost their bodies soon after they were born, to the people who ended their lives on a desert island, there is only a straight forward progress — these thoughts dawned on him. When May would come, the rent could not be paid for the apartment with blue roof tiles; the time was coming when he would not be able to stay there anymore. The Hilty's fan organized 5 Yen at that time, and negotiated a house around Iidabashi where he had roomed before. But in the evening, at the place he had moved into, Emile was attacked by something different from the fiend. Waking up in the middle of the night, as he unconsciously brushed off his lap, things certainly bigger than fleas sprinkled down. The lamp on the ceiling was reddish, and his spectacles were in the pawnshop, so he couldn't examine closely what they looked like, but they were bedbugs, make no mistake. He had often heard about them back in Kobe, but he was involved mainly with hillsides, he hadn't known of their existence yet. But that night he learned that if you were not a person involved in daytime labor, once you had been bitten by the bedbugs, you would never be able to sleep. And this house was in the back of a coffee shop facing the main strip; if you opened the window, not more than 3 inches in front of you



was another window showing piled up bedding for these women, no way to find out where the sun would be rising, it being always dark like at sunset. Automobiles and electric cars, motorbikes and public trains and freight train noises could always be heard; the whole building shook. He as he was, he had come up with a scheme and went to visit a publisher in Kudan-ue a week after.

He had some reserves around that time, and using the back of spoiled copy papers given to him, he had been composing a considerably long piece in small letters. If I was to spend the night on a park bench — he was seriously considering it — I would make a clean copy out of these rough drafts before that. He brought up this project to Mr. H, whom he had been acquainted with; this pleading voice must have been shaking, and incoherent. He didn't think he was really in a pit, in those days he had sobbed two or three times in front of people. — But, in a drawing room in a bright upstairs where young leaves clustered on a cherry tree outside the window, the publisher, who was silently listening, finally said, "It is too bad" And he told him some kind of maxim for one hour, but "If you want to go pure you have to be strong more than anything, you should never cry for help"; only these words had remained in his ears.

His request was finally accepted, and on that day before noon time, he could come back to the same Yokodera-cho. Blue quarter; other than the trees gushing out here and there like explosions of green flames, even the bathroom in the house and a water cistern were uniformly painted blue. (Except for Emile's situation, he had already lost the blue business suit that had been given to him, and this would not come back to him) This time also the gentleman of Hilty volunteered to rescue him, and presented a deal for getting into an old, huge empty box-like building, which was located at the end of the side alley of the apartment with blue roof tiles. It was a private kindergarten, but on the other side there was a sign posted: TOKYO HIGHER SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS. Right under the upstairs a 36 square foot room with windows on two sides was a graveyard, and the red temple gate and the main temple could be seen; there was a sound of tapping a wood block. In the morning, children would gather saying, "Good morning teacher" and swings would start to creak. After a while, to the sound of a piano, foot stomping and chorus singing would begin. In the upstairs hall where the desks and chairs were piled up, there was always the sound of chalk. Students in the physics department or examination candidates residing in the same building were always drawing

diagrams on the blackboard. The head master was the father of a middle-aged lady who ran the kindergarten, and was said to be eighty years old, but he looked less than sixty. "Not mediocre, at any rate" a friend of his let out, but these words began to be proven on various occasions. This Teacher K would get up at five every morning, holding two large buckets filled with water in both his hands, and repeatedly carry these to the bathroom across the corridor. Then he would lean on the table in his private room next to the classroom, facing books in original German placed on a book stand, but there was no fire in the brazier to warm his feet throughout the year. Around nine o'clock in the evening, this old mathematician was once dining alone in the kitchen; there was a person who saw him on the way back from filling a kettle with water. "It wasn't like cooked stuff, like anything warm" the reporter said concerning what was on the Teacher's plate. "It was like cold boiled beans; some unidentifiable dish was in front of him"

Teacher K came upstairs every time Emile had mail, but was never shocked by the condition of the inside of the room. When winter came, he worried about Emile, who was lying down on the floor with always the same clothes on, but listening to Emile's response that if a struggle against difficulties would be a sort of intemperance, he couldn't stop laughing and he didn't make any comment after this. He never gave a slight touch of maximisms, even if Emile started up with those sorts of questions; "Well I may be serving the third term" was his only answer. He seemed like a person who would find peace of mind from things as they were, and as they are, and as they will be. As Hilty states, if to put on age is to grow up, the first term should be until age forty, the second term until sixty, and the third term comes after this, Emile thought. Teacher K also had a vocal chord which was seemingly strengthened by long-standing lectures in Chinese classics and infinitesimal calculi. One time, an elderly gentleman who had climbed up to Emile's room on the way back from the tavern noticed a sound coming from downstairs, "Is it a radio" he asked. "No! It's a man's voice" he retorted, "I really don't like people to speak in a radio-like voice. I want to see his face" he went down the stairs indignantly, and it turned out to be the gentleman's old teacher. "Upon my word, Teacher K, have you forgotten about me?" he asked, standing erect and bowing. After he had gone outside, "Teacher K" the gentleman, according to him, who was the grandson of the Marshal T, said, "always has his white shirt tucked up, and has his belly button showing. You can see it well. If you



were to laugh at him, Teacher would get angry. Because he has his head on his shoulders, he can't see his belly under the shirt" — Among the people who had been taught by Teacher K, there was the emperor whose portrait in military attire was hanging in his room, the current Minister of the Military, and Chiang Kai-shek. Teacher would usually be slipping on something like a black satin robe, and taking this off, he would go to a public bath or to a grocery store, flapping the washed-out kimono with splashed patterns, looking like a village master. "Young people these days are thinking about things like holding onto charcoal braziers all the time" It was the only occasion when Teacher K had lamented in front of Emile. "Women don't do anything but imitations of actresses. What would all this come down to! My stupid family thinks I would be better off taking care of grandchildren. If that is better off, what I have been doing would result in nothing. These people don't understand any of this" Match wood, or several city tram coupons had been offered, and also a refill for a light bulb that had burnt out one evening; with a serene air, Teacher K had taken one from the ceiling of a Math classroom. Teacher K another time went downstairs after he had intently looked at Emile who was lying covered with a curtain; later, he again spoke of it as being injurious to the health. It encouraged Emile in some way. 'Where the Arhat with his untainted mind went, neither divinity nor Gandharva knew. I call him Brahman' 'Like a water drop on a lotus leaf, like a mustard seed on the tip of a needle, he who isn't tainted by a single desire, I call him Brahman' He would recall these two passages from the Lotus Sutra.

In no time a few months' rent had accumulated, but Teacher K never spoke of the payment. Instead he wrote it on paper, and left it in the door. And in the whole large blackened building, except for the time when children gathered, the only sound would be from the trains coming and going at intervals under the cliff. Like a house in the middle of a field, it was utterly quiet, only the paper flags of all nations were flapping in the faint summer breeze. It must have been because it was mostly occupied with 'sine-cosine-people,' and Teacher K was very strict about the sound except during school hours.

While talking with a loud-voiced guest, Emile was cautioned a few times. — Occasionally, a coquettish voice that made one naturally smile would come from the house in front of the gate. A young lady and a person that seemed to be her mother who spoke with a western accent lived there, and they had no children with them. He found out that the

voice was uttered to a cat named Chii-Bou with goby-like hair, and to a dog named John. Chii-Bou was a rare Manchurian breed, but John was just a neurotic, red-haired dog good at barking a lot. In either case it was so much so that there was merit on the owner's part. It must be said that those who are able to love animals this much are happy.

Going through two downstairs classrooms — on completely dark nights, thinking it was like an undercover mission creeping into an old house, or a hero coming to destroy monsters — he turned the corridor: there was a bathroom. Four buckets of water were kept there all the time. One midnight, the buckets were all empty. There was rinsing water in the next bathroom, but that container was also empty. Having woken up drunk he unavoidably lay down on his stomach, put his mouth to a rinsing water bowl under the basin and sucked the water down.

The tavern which once again had become his neighborhood must have been one of a kind in Tokyo. It had four marvelous big dining tables made of zelkova wood, reflections from the street on the black-sooted ceiling beam, and it was always cool. In the glass box placed on the corner of the counter, the orange color of gold fish would be reflected double or triple; he looked through it and saw a prisms rainbow on one side of the cheek of a little girl waiting on the table. It reminded him of Seiji Togo's first prominent painting *All of Her*, which he had seen on one of the picture postcards from the Nika-kai collection a long time ago. — In the courtyard of this brewery, red and white azaleas were now lined up, but this place used to have a few dozen dogs. There were left-overs, so stray dogs and the like had increased with time. One time there was an order from the public office. It stated that they had to pay taxes for their dogs. Under the circumstances the doggies were reluctantly expelled. "For the dogs and also for human beings" one young writer in Koujimachi said. "I think the tavern is doing something like penance. It's too low-priced and kindly. But, well, if there weren't a drinking place like that in Tokyo we'd be in trouble"

— There had been an incessant light tapping sound on the tin roof; it sounded like rain, but the weather was surprisingly fine. The sounds were from sparrows. A few of them repeated to bathe in a puddle of a stone stupa; there was a red rose blooming next to it, and a yellow butterfly was flapping around. A more complete red, some striking red looked over the thicket. But it wasn't an azalea. It was some red-colored bedding that was being aired out. The shadow of the stupa would be turning slowly from



left to right, following along with the shift of the sunlight. It briefly reminded him of a bird's eye view of the city with peculiar skyscrapers being looked at from the air. At this moment he was again struck that every single thing was accompanied by a shadow. A so-called death might be merely a shadow like this, and there would be no objective body whatsoever to it. . . . . he thought, recalling the Mind-Only Theory or Four T'ien-t'ai doctrines which he had given up on attempting to study. Right across the window in the center of the graveyard, one young paulownia tree, fully absorbing the magnificent May sunlight as if showering gold dust, was growing appreciably each day. One day before noon when the sky was a beautiful emerald color, and while he had been absently looking at this paulownia tree, deep within his heart feelings of unnamable joy had welled up from somewhere. He had been thinking that if he were to be given a *regeneration*, it would be a life as an eccentric person, but unlike that; rather a feeling that life might be attained as a more wholesome, natural thing, these thoughts had briefly come to him. He found himself muttering. "I saw one young paulownia that was about to advance, beyond the tombs in a May graveyard!"

A publisher in Kudan had given him a volume of *Collected Essays of Baudelaire* with a leather binding and a gilded top. He was acquainted with part of it which had appeared in a magazine, but looking at it again this time, it contained things very similar to what he had been thinking about lately. First 'After committing some debauchery, I feel like everybody has abandoned me' 'To have a love affair is to try to crawl into the loved one, but to do art is to try to crawl into oneself' Both of these, admirably said! This book also said: 'Religion is the greatest' 'The culmination of artifact is ethics' 'Spiritualists always fall in love with the maid' These corresponded with, "Christ is the culmination of dandyism" "Good attention to appearances for women, ethics for men" "Otoshi-chan at Yamani and Otsune at the public bath" that Emile himself had been thinking lately. Right around the seventh of July, 'I' whom he hadn't met with since those days, a Whistler-style canal under the Sukiya Bridge in his background, putting a jug in front of him, with that familiar prosecutor-like manner started to talk to him. "We have to start with Kant. Literature is therefore difficult. If it cannot go beyond Kant, go get yourself drunk and sleep in a blanket! It's much better" That night — it was actually near dawn, he woke up, and found that there was a gorgeous star-lit night like the catastrophe in Greek dramas outside the northeastern window.

A Pleiades-like thing — Because he didn't have spectacles — was about to rise. A Cappella-like bright star could be seen. It was the first panoramic view of the eastern sky he had seen in its entirety since coming to Tokyo this time. "The star-shining sky for my outside, an ethical principle within myself": these words of Kant, which his teacher had written for him in German when he was an adolescent, came back to him.

Aside from this dawn, there was an evening with a clear moon and a fresh breeze in the beginning of August; since then there hadn't been a completely fine day. Receiving water drops, each oak leaf by the window was shaking like an engine valve; small ripples would continually expand in the puddles scattered on the road, and would merge with each other. It's some interpretation that a crater of the moon was made by a fallen meteor, he would think. There were frequent rainbows. Lightning struck. And there were earthquakes. In the intervals of rains, he would visit Myogadani, when he couldn't feed himself by any means. A person who had been favorable to what he wrote lived in the inner part of the town. He was younger than Emile, had three children, and it wasn't that he didn't have to do anything to make his living, — seeing Emile often opening the side-gate, "I was wondering whom that person had business with, over at your place" neighbors would comment — but for about two and a half years since Emile had resided in Yokodera-cho, this person had been helping him with cypypapers, money for cigarettes or stamps or food. "They were a couple who looked like no one had ever treated them with malice" so confided a person who once accompanied Emile there, but it made sense; this couple was still surprisingly young, and the young boy and girl kept their household; it was a love match. Anyway he managed to eat after a few days, and came to the top of Hattori-zaka Slope; it was already late, between the Yurai Hill which was lamp-lit and afar right in front of him: Yamabuki-cho lowering like a valley, Lower Akagi, Kaidai-cho, picturesque night-scape extended. He always recalled, ' . . . . . On a moon-lit night, I was walking around Oxford Street on the hill passing lamp after lamp like in a dream, and I recalled the gloomy young days when I would sleep, dreaming of hunger, and would suffer from it after waking up' a passage in a confession of an opium eater; he wanted to replace the situation of this English writer with the fortune that he had. People use their own means to cut the iron chain which binds them — Or rather, a remedy that fits them will be given. His remedy was not having money. The thing that liberated him from his marriage with alcohol which



had taken hold of him, or the thing that would finally look to liberate to him was this complete non-possession. If a person who hadn't had any food for four days obtained any money, what would be the use? A spoonful of opium jelly, or a drink of alcohol. It was not that way. He was always short those amounts. Thus, instead of a cup of brandy in a morning glory cup, by ordering miso soup and a bowl of rice that one 10 Sen coin could afford, he would surprise Oume-san at the tavern. If he were still in the position to tease some pocket money out of his family, like his father used to worry about when he was living, there would have been either death or insanity. — So, he wouldn't have to write about 'Lament From The Abyss' after De Quincey. And tonight, as he stood on top of a slope in Koishikawa he imagined, wondering where he would remember this night, years after this, and he couldn't help feeling himself connected with the souls of the people who had lingered in the past, daunted, and all the successors who would stop here in reverie. It came to his mind that Christ was the culmination of dandyism at that moment, and he came up with these words in that very place. "The thing which can appease even heaven is ethics" "Only women can understand the saints"

The aforementioned Hilty admirer, saying he could read it like a magazine, gave Emile a small used blue-covered octavo book which he said he had obtained at a concession stand in Shinjuku. It was one of the three volumes translated from Schopenhauer, which he used to have a long time ago, but which was then an object of pedantry. Now he opened the pages again, and thought what an interesting book it had been. And he read, as earnestly as Nietzsche who had found the original book at a book store, and read it night and day the whole way through. It laid out examples that were old news for him, who was oriental, but it did generously, carefully, and even passionately, explain the significance of ascetics and saints. Dear Mme Guyon's name would often appear. Especially what struck him was a statement that the truth of the world is ultimately these words, the words quoted from Veda. 'Thou art That' (Tat tvam asi) — Thus the autumn passed, and on the night of a Yuletide celebration, which was also the eve of Emile's thirty some-odd birthday, walking on an embankment in Ichigaya, he recognized the crescent moon which looked exactly like a Turkish flag close to a big star. The star looked like Jupiter, and he was right. Because the next day at daybreak, when he tried to turn the right-angled corridor, over the tall elm tree in the back yard, Venus could be seen. The inner planet must have been projecting faint shadows

behind everything on the ground. It was that big, brightly shining Venus. A terrible ten-year-long sweat during sleep, and the loud sound of clearing his throat had both ceased. The years of card playing with alcohol allured him to danger, but this also could be called Good News.

For three days after the New Year, he didn't eat anything. In February his bedding was lost. There was no particular reason. He just sold them for some 7 Yen to a ragman from the Peninsula who passed by. The sunshine stopped coming into his room. From the glass window which seemed to disintegrate if touched, the wind would leak in, the whiteness of exhalation wasn't any different from the outside air. Even during the day his limbs were stiff as if frozen. He had made up his mind that from now on, probably until the end, no brazier or bedding would be given to him. Once he assumed a posture, he couldn't move because of the cold. Similarly, insects would lie motionless under ground probably until the spring lightning would hit, he thought, but he couldn't help bursting out. When he couldn't lie down because of the extreme cold, — the coldness in his legs would usually provoke a dream of swimming that he was looking at the horizon and kicking cold water with all his strength — if he woke up from a doze on such occasions, he would become aware of himself rolled up in a sun-faded curtain and he would start to giggle. This was because, if not a mummy, it seemed to be a body of a person who had died on the street and then been taken to a basement. If there were a few more sleeping fellows like this, in the deformed 36 square foot upstairs, the ones lying face up liberally scattered with a towel or a newspaper on their faces would be just like an annihilated unit in a Moroccan fort. Of course this would be restricted to the height of summer. — But, during the most severe cold, he recalled two or three Peninsula people that he had chummed with at the tavern. If he was going to die, all the things could be taken care of with some 20 Yen or so if he asked some of those people — He would only have to write these arrangements in a letter, and he had been considering it just in case. This is not talking about suicide. The only things interesting to him in newspapers he occasionally picked up were articles on suicide, but: It's different now! in the town near the strait, there was a person who had already divined the change in his state of mind in the future. It was an occasion in which he had found an unexpected ally in a usually indifferent person, instead of among the usual well-wishers. That person would tell him. "If you ever commit suicide, I will only despise you as mediocre. It is all right to be a beggar, but I think you had better



live" That was exactly right. 'Suicides are those who can't cut off their will and instead kill only the phenomena. They put their will for life aside, and abandon only the actual living' in other words, Schopenhauer taught him, they want to live, but they despair the self, which is a particular phenomenon of the will for life, and they try to discard the self in general cases — 'it indicates the theoretical possibilities not of the thing itself, but of those who fit into a so-called recognition of the pleasure principle; and even for him the internal conflicts of human living are fully experienced, its miserable ending is an agony worthy of erasing the will for life'

One thing was becoming gradually clear to Emile: because suicides had quit half-way, they would bring themselves back to the starting point. At least it meant morning sickness in the world to come. So, the death Emile is thinking about now is, 'It is no problem to die on this evening' a death this way. — He had also become aware of what crude and indecent things bedding and tatami were. And taking this as a clue, I will replace the bedding with a white blanket, and I wouldn't complain if there was an everyday Indian-cotton garment with a small red cross sewn in, he would think. Put sashimi next to the steaming hot white rice, and add a bowl of clear soup . . . . . these are the origins of nuisance. If you replace the white rice with millet seeds or Decan-grass seeds or buck wheat, how refreshed you would be. The tool is only one pan, and an old fashioned, slightly crooked one is better. But, for him who had sold his bedding immediately after the first day of spring, — as a donation from somebody, the bedding his only accommodation for hospitality, if there was a guest, "Get into this bedding first" he used to say, but now they were dirty — not damp or anything, and they weren't moldy. Those stages had already passed, and the dried bedding shone white, similar to his clothing, which had become like cardboard pressed with a roller. But in any case, it was lined with cotton, and the ragman had put his hands on it.

His skin had goose bumps; and because its owner was constantly quivering, each striped pattern on his splashed patterned kimono would draw a whirlpool. But if a chilliness crept up he could contract his limbs and strain himself, and it went away. If he wrapped up his legs, and also covered his head with something, he would remain wakeful but it was not impossible to fall asleep. But lying while facing sideways, there would be more surface exposed to the air, so it was necessary to lie on his back. But then the coldness forced him to curl up like a shrimp. In either case it was difficult to change posture once assumed. His pelvis ached, and by

touching his body, he noticed the chilling cold parts were expanding every night, but it wasn't untrue that there was a sort of pleasure to it. — The problem was, perhaps caused by gulping out of a bucket of water with thin ice on top, the frequent diarrhea. On such occasions it was indeed hard to refrain from eating. The chorus from the backyard "A Happy Lunch Time Now" would disturb his mind, and he would envy John who was making sounds with his tray. But a little bit more endurance would stop the diarrhea, so the fasting had to be continued. In this room where there was nothing but a tatami floor, if a piece of bread was brought in, its smell would stay for two or three days. When the buckets in the bathroom were empty, there was pleasure in finding out he could drink a cupful of cold water the next morning. — The time would contract to one-fourth compared to before, and by the third day of fasting, one hour would feel like only twenty or thirty minutes. If you wait in a unit of five hours, once it is light, noon is near; when the sound of the wood block in the temple starts, the sun falls after one unit, and waiting another one unit; the midnight vesper bell rings and it is already the next day, and noon will soon come around again. Spending every day like this, in his mind there would spring out one after another various kinds of principles of physics, or ratios of chemical compounds, or ideas in mechanics that were simple, and that no one had noticed before. Most issues were especially concerned with types of leverages, sockets, and wiring for classic aeroplanes. On these occasions, though he hadn't had a clue about Mr. Lee's Higher Sphere Geometry, he believed that he understood the 'Line Sphere Conversion' stated in it. The funny thing was, while staring at a fragment of mirror that he had found on the street, he first understood the principle of photography; in other words, the fact that a thing called a pupil was actually a penetrating small hole. The fact that shadows of things at noon don't correspond with the sun on the meridian had already been proven quite a while ago by the shadow on the drying terrace right under his eyes.

The dismal words of a one-eyed person whom the Hilty admirer had accompanied on New Year's Day still remained in Emile's ear —

"All things would lean toward the opposite direction, as I had thought. So this year, we should try to be aware of the situation rather than correcting the fault . . . . . Or rather, let's try to extend our faults"

"When happiness comes along, I avoid it. Once you grab that big rock, it is obvious that you will altogether fall into the bottomless pit. In all things if you feel pleasant, that is the end of it"



According to this person, art must be a frail and beautiful thing. Art is like a bouquet, for example, a moth on the verge of death scattering lapidopteran scales between the glass windows in a pale raining daybreak; in these terms Emile agreed with the idea. He had found out in the course of conversation that this 'T' had, in his boyhood, when he was sketching outside, witnessed the monoplane of Kimura and Tokuda, flying officers, fall headfirst whirling around to a coppice. Later he had been a good friend of Kita Murayama, and once a member of the Japanese Art Academy. At that time he was selected for a special collection, but from the beginning he didn't like his painting colleagues. He instead took an interest in literature, and he had been wandering for years. He occasionally took up the palette, but work didn't have to be completed. It must be graffiti. Many people around Emile had been replaced, but he had never met a unique character like this Redon-admiring 'T' yet. None of the subject was mentioned whenever men would meet. Emile himself had been like that these last few years. Unless he wanted her to have children, there would be no need to be involved with a woman, he had thought. When he confided this, 'T' replied, "It is none other than splendor" "Epicureanism is an emphasis on time, and on the contrary a virgin is the first step to true virtue. Waking and then waking again, this dream of time which makes every single one of us would have an end, and we are all waiting for a hazy, unnamable thing which would start to assert itself" A man of wisdom in Frankfurt had written: 'One way or another a better future would have to arrive for me without mistake. If not, the sunset must not be beautiful like this' (Hebbel — *Song of Alemannics*)

He must be close in age to Emile. 'T' had silver hair à la 'Persian prince Cyrus,' and his one eye was covered with black glass which was for protection against dust; he seemed as if he would not make a single noise, his gloomy tone of voice sounded like an address before the departure of a storming party. It was enough to believe that it was some encounter, but at the same time, it felt like there would not be an occasion to talk unreservedly with this person. He felt there was an impression of a person who could never bare the truth, or who couldn't speak the truth. — This point brought forth the *secrecy* in his husky-voiced peer 'F.' Like 'F,' 'T' was a seller of guessing games for children, a gentlemen coming in and out of a nurses' training school in the back street, a Rikubu beggar-pilgrim in the Shikoku Island, and also a stevedore of a foreign route ship. For 'T,' 'A thing which itself doesn't like to be known' had been an addiction, and 'the unhappiness

that can not be alone' was tormenting him. Thus *man of the crowd* which Poe said . . . . . one night, Emile contemplated. "Ever since I could remember, I wanted to become the most unhappy person in the world" 'T' had said, but it really sounded like a fake-Hercules. — On the other hand, the story of Arhat and Bodhisattva in the streets that he had occasionally told, was worth listening to. In other words, there are people who imitate others in every way, people who are fascinated by convenience, people who are obsessed with keeping good health, people who adapt to anything in no time, people whose concern is restricted solely to self and faction or family, but 'X' or 'Y' or 'Z' who are the opposite of those tribes, — those who are not seeking any object — those who are aiming at an *as yet invisible target* — those who don't become one with hardship — those who are serving not the self, but all the selves which exist in the world — those who are playing with innumerable communicable spirits — thus, compared to those of a diamond-tribe that are living in death, people that he had known would be, all in all, broken pieces of a ceramic bowl.

He thought that 'T,' during one night in May that year, had given him some suggestion concerning the secret of art when he accompanied Emile to the one-day-only showing of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligary* at a movie theater in Kanda. It was already his third or fourth time at that movie, but this time, "This is too well made, the thing that exists there is not a movie but rather a piece of nature" he would think. That day, 'T' had taken his spectacles out of the pawn shop, but after a half day's service these were immediately returned to the same place. For Emile, spectacles were no longer necessary other than to see a movie. The world looks more artistic without spectacles. Is it because everything looks like the bottom of water scenery in Marie Laurencin's domain? No, a toy automobile that an infant pulls with a string would become a tottering pigeon going after food, and a pattern in a woman's kimono would be transformed to a real flower. The basis for acknowledging Dr. Caligary had come from reading a treatise on Hoffmann by Dr. Koeber, on a story of *Serapion*, also recommended by 'T' right before that occasion. And he, just like 'T' had confided, found himself impressed while reading *Golden Pot*. It was a true work of art. It was delightful that an apple seller on the street was actually a personification of a beet, and it was also fashionable that a university student who was captured in a bottle would think he could take a walk anywhere freely. Like this, there were various motifs, but who was the person that served as a match to a candle of Emile's heart which had been somewhat smoldering,



taking over the morning star Christmas past at daybreak? — the person who undertook the ignition at the last moment was, a female friend of 'T.' It was brought by this young lady who once took on the famous alias of Tong-yang Mei-ran-fan in Shanghai. — The name of the protagonist in this description 'Emile' owed to her. When his opinion that Christ was the culmination of dandyism was told through 'T' to her, "That person is like a respectable Emile" she remarked.

Since Emile was said to be hungry, she sent him some hand-prepared bread and butter (fine French bread was used) and red tea in a beer bottle. Now a flame was lit on the candle, he couldn't help thinking. It was well-timed, too, a red cannon ball which flew over a paper-cut pureland — Pon's comet was approaching the earth again. Mars appeared after fifteen years. On a night of curfew, he went out to the street to pick up a cigarette; he couldn't find any in the complete darkness, but instead, above his head, 'That which maketh even the saints wonder' (*The Divine Comedy*) was the Milky Way, dripping down like a splash of milk that Rhea gave to the young Jupiter. To the south left hand side where it was sliding down, Mars was red, shining like a red Ground-Cherry. The sky had never before looked so much like a magnificent and sublime piece of music. A passage from Schopenhauer's book in the blue cover came to his mind. It transformed itself into his own words. "It is already not a submission to the will. Human beings must reach realization" he thought. "In this stage they can participate in objective undertakings. For such people there is no happiness, instead there is no unhappiness. Only their longing remains. — What is longing in this case?" he followed his thought. "It's not *Treatise on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna*, not a line sphere conversion, not any such thing; but is only one thing: I have to start over as a human being. — What kind of human being are we trying to become? It is this, myself. With particular colors, vibrating, in other words, myself who is living, who is fascinated with a brass bullet or a sea battle with fireworks. It would be necessary to go back to the place where I am most myself" When the director of the insane asylum obtained the long-cherished sleeping-man, he walked around and repeatedly shouted, with a maddening joy, "Be Caligary!" Right, 'I must not forget this desolate eeriness of solitude. Only within this would such a life evolve around a devout Gemut' Serapion stated. It indicates the things that have to be done with this very passion. My demon comet Pon, do not make me remissable in renouncing

the entire physical thing. Please, open me the appreciable eye for the thing that lies beyond your orbit which is only the traces of invisible things!

One morning, on the cover of a literary coterie magazine called 'Cogito,' which had been slid between the opening of the door, was a familiar Buddhist statue. It was the same one as he had found on a page of the encyclopedia the day after he had taught someone about constellations in the town near the strait. The insect-like sitting statue in the half-lotus position made him remember something even now. It was the previous night, what the red-faced 'T' was talking about at an Oden Shop on the back of Ginza Street. The author of *Samantabhadra* had expounded on *limit*, and quoted Einstein's metaphor on the speed of light. And while he was stating that because *existence* is vague, necessitating a return to phenomena, a conclusion had been drawn: "Thus, Bodhisattvas who have once deviated remotely, naturally have to return to the real world" If so, had the Bodhisattva with earrings and jeweled crown on the copper-print also been returned to the twentieth century, he thought. Then where? On the tip of Venus shining thinly in a crescent moon shape, in the shadow of the satellite Io creeping up like a fly in winter on the surface of Jupiter, on a precipice of Neptune where a methane wind blows over a waving acetylene sea. — in the spectrum of nebula which was photographed by Dr. Humason. And also in the cerebrum of mine that is thinking like now, possibly stored as a few micra bundles of light? Then Emile perceived. The child of Brahman, its name Ajita, 56 billion 70 million years after, reaching supreme perfect bodhi under a Nāgapuṣpa tree, the one that had been entrusted with the mission of redeeming the sentient beings that have been left out of Śākyamuni Buddha's teachings; it is none other than he, it has to be.

I definitely saw such a dream near daybreak. On a lotus leaf swaying in complete darkness; yet I was barely sitting on it without falling, naked and wrapped around in the old curtain. Now from the graveyard in the Ullambana Festival, incense smoke is incessantly rising, reminiscent of a morning in the East . . . . .

7 / 08 / 1996




Taruho Inagaki

Born in 1900 in Osaka, Japan. Died in 1977. Loved aeroplanes and stars. He wrote on cosmology, and on love for young boys.

Taruho's literary work includes *A thousand seconds and a second story* (1923), *Vita Macinicalis*, *Aesthetic of Uranisms*, *A-senses and V-senses*, *My Eureka*, and *Complete Works* (1970).

*Miroku* (弥勒, translated as Maitreya, means friendly or benevolent. Maitreya refers to the Buddhist Messiah, or next Buddha, who waits in the Tūṣita heaven before descending to earth) was first published in book form in 1946. Part II of this work had been published in *Shin-cho* (New Tides) magazine in 1940, though Taruho kept revising it over the course of twenty years. The final version debuted in the aforementioned *Complete Works* in 1970.

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Taruho





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